

Homemade Pizza Dough for Beginners

Prep: 2 hours (including rise) or overnight (refrigerated rise) • Cook: 15 minutes

A soft, chewy pizza crust with a pleasantly crisp exterior and rich olive oil aroma—simple, reliable, and perfect for first-time dough makers. Yields two flavorful 12-inch crusts ready for your favorite toppings.

Ingredients

- 1 1/3 cups (320 ml) water (warm, about 110°F/43°C)
- 1 tablespoon (13 g) granulated sugar
- 2 1/4 teaspoons (7 g, 1 packet) instant yeast (Platinum Yeast from Red Star)
- 3 1/2 to 4 cups (438–500 g) unbleached all-purpose flour (spooned and leveled; plus more as needed)
- 2 tablespoons (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil (plus more for greasing)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- sprinkle cornmeal (for dusting the pan)
- as needed extra-virgin olive oil (for brushing)
- 2 garlic cloves (minced (optional))
- 1 cup (250 g) pizza sauce (store-bought)
- 4 cups (1 lb/454 g) mozzarella cheese (shredded)

Instructions

1. Whisk the warm water, granulated sugar, and instant yeast together in the bowl of a stand mixer (or a large mixing bowl). Cover and let rest for 5 minutes.
2. Add the flour, olive oil, and salt. Beat on medium speed for about 2 minutes, until the dough starts to pull away from the sides of the bowl.
3. Knead the dough for 5 minutes (in the mixer or by hand on a lightly floured surface) until smooth.
4. If the dough is very sticky, sprinkle in additional flour 1 teaspoon at a time until you have a soft, slightly tacky dough. Poke the dough; if it slowly bounces back, it's ready to rise.
5. Place the dough in a lightly greased bowl, cover tightly, and let rise at room temperature for about 90 minutes, or refrigerate overnight for a slow rise.
6. Punch down the risen dough to release air. Divide into 2 equal pieces.
7. On a lightly floured surface, roll or stretch each piece into a 12-inch circle. Cover and let rest while you prepare pans and toppings.
8. Preheat the oven to a very high temperature. If using a stone, preheat it as well.
9. Prepare pans by greasing with olive oil and sprinkling with cornmeal.

10. Transfer dough to prepared pans. Brush tops lightly with olive oil and, if using, sprinkle with minced garlic.
11. Spread pizza sauce evenly over the dough and top with shredded mozzarella (and any additional desired toppings).
12. Bake until the crust is golden and the cheese is melted and bubbly, about 15 minutes. Slice and serve.

Tags: Pizza, Bread, Beginner Friendly, Yeasted Dough, Freezer Friendly, Dinner, Baking, Dough, Yeast, Yeast Dough, Family Friendly

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